Report of the 25th Administrative Roundup

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Teacher Education

Illinois State Normal University
February, 1958

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TEACHER EDUCATION

Field Service Bulletin of the Illinois State Normal University

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FOREWORD

The Twenty-fifth Annual Administrators Roundup was held at Illinois State Normal University on Friday, December 7, 1957. The annual Roundup programs are planned to bring together the staff members of teacher-education institutions and the administrators and teachers in public schools in an effort to identify public school problems and to improve teacher-education programs to meet these problems.

In the 1957 program representatives of twelve public schools gave descriptions and demonstrations of work they are carrying on in their schools. The purposes behind these presentations were to acquaint staff members of teacher-education institutions and public school personnel with work that is going on in public schools of an experimental nature and that "give promise of improved elementary and secondary education." In this bulletin short descriptions are given of these twelve presentations.

The Roundup programs over the years have influenced the teacher-education programs in Illinois. They have also brought college and university faculty members and public school personnel together to work cooperatively in improving public education in Illinois.

The Twenty-sixth Annual Roundup will be held Saturday, December 6, 1958. Complete information on this program will be mailed in ample time to make plans to attend the conference.

—The ISNU Roundup Committee
J. W. Carrington, Chairman

PROGRAM

Illinois State Normal University 25th Roundup

Saturday, December 7, 1957

9:30-50 a.m.—Registration — Corridor of Capen Auditorium

10:00-30 a.m.—Opening Session — Capen Auditorium
Dean Arthur H. Larsen, Chairman
Music—University Band
"Our Work Plan for the Day"—Roundup Committee

10:40-12:30 p.m.—Presentations by Representatives of 12 School Systems — Schroeder Hall

12:45-2:45 p.m.—Complimentary Luncheon and Program — Student Union
President Robert G. Bone, Chairman

Music—University Men's Glee Club

"Experimental Projects in Illinois Schools"—Eric Johnson, First Assistant, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Springfield

"Services Teacher-Education Institutions in Illinois Should Give Public Schools"—Harold Metcalf, Superintendent, Bloom Township High School, Chicago Heights

Discussion Sections

Local Research—A Technique for Improving Instruction
Earl H. Dieken, Curriculum Director, Lincoln-Way High School, New Lennox
Miss Cecilia Lauby, ISNU, Chairman

Teaching Chemistry with Use of Semi-Micro Laboratory Techniques
Allen M. Baker, Teacher of Chemistry, Hinsdale High School
D. H. Dalluge, ISNU, Chairman

Teaching Mathematics with a Mathematics Laboratory
Richard Mariani, Teacher in John Mills School, Elmwood Park
Miss Ethel Stein, ISNU, Chairman

Television as an Instructional Aid
Miss Wanda B. Mitchell, Teacher of English and Director of Program in Use of TV, Township High School, Evanston
Harold Moore, ISNU, Chairman

The College-High School Placement Program with Emphasis on Courses for Able Students
Charles O. Austin, Principal, Rock Island High School
Miss Alice Eikenberry, ISNU, Chairman

Three-Level Division of Program for Composition and Literature in a Small High School

Rex M. Millikin, Principal, Geneseo High School
Theodore Almy, ISNU, Chairman

Adjustment of Program for Gifted Children in the Regular Classroom in the Champaign Public Schools

James J. Gallagher, Associate Professor of Education, Institute for Research and Exceptional Children, University of Illinois
Miss Louise Farmer, ISNU, Chairman

Providing Varied Learning Experiences Through Grouping

Kenneth S. Hammer, Superintendent of Elementary Schools, and Eldon Bethard, Assistant Superintendent, Morris
Iohn L. Reusser, ISNU, Chairman

Ungraded Reading Program in the Primary School

C. H. Pygman, Superintendent of Elementary Schools, Maywood
Miss Helen Nance, ISNU, Chairman

A Functioning Area Program of Special Education

C. Lewis Martin, Area Director of Special Education, LaGrange
Miss Lillie Mae Rickman, ISNU, Chairman

Remedial Reading Program in the Elementary School

Miss Ruth Wallis, Director of Remedial Reading, Pekin Public Schools
Larry Hafner, ISNU, Chairman

Experimentation with Individualized Reading as a Teaching Method

J. Weston Harding, Principal, Harrison School, Peoria
Miss Ethel Wooley, ISNU, Chairman

EXPERIMENTAL PROJECTS IN ILLINOIS SCHOOLS

ERIC H. JOHNSON*

There are a number of ways in which a person might begin to discuss the question of experimental programs. Through a number of years of association with the Illinois Curriculum Program, I became acquainted with many such projects. I do not propose to spend this time, however, in describing experimental programs. It is my intention to call attention to a critical condition for further experimentation.

I am going to proceed on the assumption that there is no question as to whether or not schools, or more precisely the staff members in schools, should be doing experimental work. This strikes me as being one of the most crucial of all demands on professional personnel. The question I should like to discuss is how we determine if an experimental approach to an educational problem has merit. How do we determine if one procedure is better than another or whether content is better mastered under one set of conditions than another? How do we secure evidence of success or failure? And there are times when evidence is lacking on a proposal that proves valuable when put into practice.

I am going to attempt to present some ideas at this point that I hope will persuade you to accept my point of view. In general, I would take the position that as a profession we must move in the direction of conducting research projects at the local level, that teachers must participate in this evaluation, and that they are capable, or nearly so, of handling the process which is involved. This work must proceed at the local level because in our own state the decision has long been made that we will have local control of public education. It would be impossible even to consider carrying on research or evaluation programs in local schools if the higher institutions of the state or the Office of Public Instruction were to furnish all of the required research workers. If we are to have these research workers we must secure them from within our own school systems. This situation leads to the question of whether or not teachers are capable of carrying on the research activities which should accompany experimental work.

My answer to this question would be a very definite yes, and I should like to present a partial argument for this position. I would contend that when you train a good teacher you have done almost everything that needs to be done to train a research worker. I should like to illustrate this point by comparing the teaching process and the research process.

First of all, let us consider the teaching process. This fall thousands of teachers entered classrooms all over this state and nation. Every teacher who entered a classroom, whether it was at the elementary level or a specific subject at the secondary level, faced a

* First Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction

similar situation. The teacher had a definite job to do in terms of developing attitudes, modifying behavior, or mastering a body of knowledge. Accomplishing the purposes which were established for the course or the year's work represented her problem. Faced with this situation she would say to herself, "Here's a class and I know these things about the pupils. This is what I want to do, and in my estimation if I do this then this is going to happen." No teacher can go into any classroom without some such thought.

The actual teaching then takes place, and the content of the course or the year's work is presented. As the teaching proceeds the teacher observes, quizzes, examines, and discusses. In short, as she proceeds she gathers evidence which gives some indication of whether or not her "if—then" proposition is proceeding according to expectation. As the teacher concludes a portion of the work, she examines the evidence and records her conclusions insofar as the pupils are concerned through a process of reporting pupil progress. As a result of her own observations and of the reactions of the pupils she modifies her teaching procedure. In very general terms, this is a description of the teaching process.

Now let us take a look and attempt to visualize by comparison what a person does when working through the research process. The research worker is confronted first of all with the problem area within which she will operate. The first thing she must do is define the specific problem to be considered within the broader framework. There may be a number of solutions to this problem but eventually the research worker will arrive at one to be tested. The research worker will then say to herself, "This is the problem to be solved, and my guess is that if I attack this problem in this fashion, then these results will be secured." This is the hypothesis, and if it is to be tested, a procedure must be designed that will yield evidence. A test is designed and the hypothesis is tried out to determine whether or not the "if—then" proposition will hold water. As the test is conducted, the research worker gathers evidence through procedures involving observation, questionnaires, interviews, or other measurements. She then takes all of this evidence and puts it down so that it can be analyzed. On the basis of what she gleans from the evidence she may have to re-design the test and go back and re-test. The weight of the evidence is used to determine whether or not the hypothesis was validated. This, in general outline, is the research process.

The similarity between the teaching process and the research process is striking. Teachers must go through the process I have described and they must do so all the time. It is upon this basis that I make the statement that when you train a good teacher you have done most of what is necessary to develop a research worker. There are some special skills which need to be applied at certain points, but there is ample evidence from experimental work now being conducted by the Illinois Curriculum Program that teachers can and do carry

on research projects in their own classrooms and that the training program which releases this competence may be measured in days.

I am sure that some of you have the reaction that I am describing a process which has come to be known as "action research." I do not want to quarrel with this terminology, but I do see some unfortunate results from using this term. Somehow action research has come to be looked upon as a particular kind of research, when in reality it is used to describe what is hoped will result from the research process—namely, that some action will take place which will modify and improve school practices. For my own part, I would prefer to look at research as extending along a continuum from "practical" at one end through "idealistic" at the other. This is not to say that research which is conceived with little purpose in mind is impractical. It would simply hold that we see no immediate use for it and are not concerned with immediate usage. Practical research, on the other hand—and this is what I visualize teachers and administrators carrying on—must be of some immediate use or it will not be done within classroom situations. Certainly research all along this continuum needs to be carried on and designs will vary according to circumstances, but one is not to be conceived as being "better" than the other.

I should also like to point out that in my judgment professional educators must pay more attention to the behavioral sciences and less attention to the physical sciences in the designing of experimental projects and the accompanying research which goes to make up evaluation. We deal with people and the behavior of people in learning situations. We will never be in the very comfortable and secure spot of being able to say that people will always react in precisely the same fashion to the same stimulus. As an aside, I would say that we would be well advised to pay more attention in the design of our research to the work which is going on in sociology and anthropology.

Finally, we ought to think just a bit about the alternatives to classroom teachers carrying on research projects. It would seem to me that the alternatives all go in the direction of trial-and-error improvement of school programs. While this procedure may be useful over a long period of time, there are too many pressures on education for the modification of programs to depend upon this uncertain process. There is some current evidence that a "hysterical" approach to curriculum is being advocated in some places. This is the approach which says that a pressure such as Sputnik I and II ought to cause us to modify all of our programs immediately to combat some unknown force. We will all agree that programs need to be improved and that we will probably have to change some present practice to achieve this end. At the same time, we would agree that we do better if we change our programs on the basis of real evidence rather than upon hysterical reaction to world events.

There is always a question as to whether or not a training program ought to be pre-service or in-service. I feel sure that there is much that teacher-training programs and higher institutions may do on a

pre-service level as related to an understanding of the research process and its relationship to teaching. On the other hand, I know that teacher training programs are very crowded and that there are some competences that are more easily gained with experience in the profession. Regardless of whether the greatest accomplishment will come at the pre-service or in-service level, I feel strongly that Illinois has the resources to move forward in the modification of local school programs on the basis of good research evidence gathered by its own professional workers.

SERVICES TEACHER-EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN ILLINOIS SHOULD GIVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HAROLD METCALF*

First, I wish to express appreciation to the University for extending to me the privilege of participating in this Twenty-Fifth Annual Administrative Roundup, a meeting which over the years has been significant in the life of the university and public education in the state of Illinois.

The topic assigned to me for today implies services of teacher-education institutions over and above the preparation of teachers. The present American scene, however, calls for consideration of problems shared at all levels in public education; problems stemming from very rapid population growth and from pressures created by such growth, and problems arising from controversy over the relative merits of Russian and American education.

We in the profession find ourselves in the situation described by the Red Queen in *Alice in Wonderland*: "Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that."

It is particularly important in the years immediately ahead that teachers colleges maintain a dynamic teacher-education program in the face of mounting obstacles. We in the public elementary and secondary schools, who may be thought of as the consumers of the product, are most interested that graduates of teachers colleges be better equipped than ever before because the teacher's work becomes more complex in a time of rapid changes in the social scene.

The second report of the President's Committee on Education beyond the High School states: "Our colleges and universities are expected by the American public to perform something close to a miracle in the next ten to fifteen years. They are called upon to provide education of a continually improving quality to a far larger number of students—at least six million by 1970 compared to three million now."

Also, the report of the Higher Education Commission to the Governor and Legislature of Illinois states: "Across the nation the experts are telling us with one voice: In the next two decades the number of youth in college will more than double. In the fall of 1950 there were 95,000 full-time day students in Illinois higher institutions. It is estimated that in 1977 the full-time day enrollment will be 221,000, an increase of 133 per cent over 1950 . . . . There appears

*Superintendent of Bloom Township High School, Chicago Heights

to be little doubt that in two decades the higher institutions of Illinois will have to take care of well over twice as many students as they did in 1950."

Teacher-education institutions have helped both the elementary schools and the secondary schools in anticipating bulges in enrollment and in planning for housing and staffing larger schools and a greater number of schools. So great has been the impact of the increased financial burden and other problems stemming from school population growth that the American public has shown more interest in education in the last few years than at any time during my service as a teacher and administrator.

Unquestionably one of the most important factors in the continued contribution of public education to American life is that of finance. In our great State of Illinois, although statistics indicate that financial support of education compared with what other states are doing is not as great as it should be, forward strides have been taken in the last legislative session. It is important that as we face the future we see the necessity of considering the complete structure of education, kindergarten through college, as a whole, and that all of us work toward the support of an adequate program at all levels. The Illinois School Problems Commission and the Commission on Higher Education must cooperate toward these ends. All who are involved in administration of public schools and colleges must take an active part in efforts to inform and educate the public on the various needs which must be met. Unless the problems of housing and staffing are solved at the teachers college level, we cannot look forward to education of teachers in adequate numbers even through we continue to demonstrate greater effort in recruiting promising young people into the teaching profession.

Up to this point I have been somewhat presumptuous in dwelling on aspects of teacher-college function and support on the premise that it is tremendously important that those of us who work in any phase of public education comprehend the total picture.

Let us turn our attention for a moment to another aspect of teacher education. The University of Illinois is now testing and counseling all applicants for admission who are in the lowest quarter of their high school graduating class. I have yet to find one such person from Bloom who has been advised to enter the University; each has been discouraged because probability studies indicate small chance for graduation.

Does this new practice encourage greater numbers of poorly equipped high school graduate to apply at teacher-training institutions? If facilities and instruction in teacher-training institutions are limited in relation to numbers who apply, is this not a time for re-examining entrance requirements with a view toward serving those who have greatest potential to become teachers? Too, does it not fall on us as administrators and teachers in the elementary and the high

schools to increase our efforts to recruit young people for the profession? Too often we have been parties to encouraging teachers colleges to accept youth of very limited capacity. Too often have we been party to running down our profession, thus influencing capable students to turn to other fields; but the public must accept its share of blame for failing to recognize the teaching profession in the same category as law, medicine, engineering, and other learned groups.

In Bloom there has been a noticeable change in attitude of faculty during the last few years. Also, our Future Teachers Club, the first in the state by the way, is very active. Illinois State Normal University has played host to the group on two occasions and arranged for a tour of the campus, lunch, and conference with the staff. Although allowed only five Teacher College Scholarships, Bloom's 1957 graduating class received sixteen through taking up eleven scholarships allotted to but unused by other Cook County high schools. Teacher-training institutions have opportunity to broaden service to the public schools of the state through study and development of positive approaches to recruitment of promising young people into the teaching profession.

The geographical distribution of teachers colleges in the State of Illinois implies service to surrounding areas. The December Illinois State Normal University *Newsletter* included a table captioned "Teachers Take First Jobs Near Home." Such information is very encouraging in the light of our knowledge of strenuous efforts made by some states to recruit from Illinois. Not only should teacher-training institutions serve their areas in the training of teachers but in other important ways if they have the resources and personnel to provide other needed services.

I do not wish my remarks today to be considered critical of what teachers colleges in the State of Illinois are doing. Services now being rendered may be in excess of suggestions made. If you will pardon my reference, Bloom since 1946 has depended greatly on institutions of higher learning for help and direction. We are now engaged in a fifth survey done by the University of Illinois Office of Field Services, to project enrollment and advise on questions of enlarging the present school or establishing other schools to meet future enrollment demands. Also, we are actively engaged with another university in a project which has for its purpose the identification of ways and means of increasing effectiveness of classroom teachers. A members of our staff attended a three-day curriculum meeting last week at a third university, and we are participating today in an important Roundup at Illinois State Normal University.

Research in the local schools, using semi-micro techniques in chemistry, mathematics, laboratory activities, television, courses for able students, three-level division of program in the small high school, program for gifted, grouping, graded reading, special education, remedial reading, and individualized reading—all are included on this program at Illinois State Normal University today, and each is a

sign of the times—the better use of material resources and the individualization of instruction to meet the present day needs. We in the public schools look to the teacher-training institution for consultation on instructional and other types of problems. We welcome the opportunity to visit in a professor's office and dwell on perplexities of approach in one area or another. We welcome the availability of university personnel for special services in our schools or at the university. We appreciate the privilege of participating in seminar or extension courses which stimulate us to more effective work in our schools.

Another phase of service is that of the teacher-training institution providing resources for research and experiment involving schools in surrounding areas. To choose an example, we go some distance away to Teachers College, Columbia University, which is the center of the Metropolitan Schools Council. Faculties and boards of education of public schools in the area cooperate as a council under the direction of Paul Mort and other staff members. Efforts to solve problems, some of which are common to many schools in the area and others peculiar to individual schools, continues on a year-to-year basis. A material center was built from contributions from member schools and became a useful resource. As progress was made, brochures describing techniques and findings were prepared for distribution. Such a desirable service to schools, particularly those in the area of location of the teacher-training institution, need not be an extra financial burden to the university; most school boards are quite willing to share in expense in endeavors in which they have a part and from which they derive help, particularly if such cooperation is recommended by the local administrator.

Continuation of the commendable work in special education and laboratory schools here at Illinois State Normal University is strongly urged. Frontier thinking, research, and experimentation, as well as demonstration of new approaches to instructional problems, are significant services to the profession. The public schools in our area, even though they are banding together to finance special education for mentally handicapped but educable pupils, are confronted by roadblocks. Trained teachers are not available and, more important, psychologists who fulfill the state requirements cannot be found. Possibly attention should be given to rewriting the requirements for the position of psychologist.

Along with what is done on campus, teacher-training institutions need to move out into the schools in order to come to grips with situations as teachers find them. Practice teaching programs and internship programs for administrators conducted in cooperation with capable personnel in public elementary or secondary schools are growing in popularity. Such plans call for intelligent supervision and guidance by college personnel. Beginning teachers who have taken their practice teaching in public schools have commented favorably on interest shown by high school cooperating teachers and on the value of ex-

perience in natural school settings. I believe that our schools also benefit from such practices because staff members from the teacher-training institutions in their visits to the schools stimulate cooperating teachers to do their best in setting examples and also bring new ideas to the faculty.

Is it not necessary, however, to continually evaluate current practices? Are there not more and better ways in which teachers colleges and public schools may cooperate to better prepare students for teaching? Another area of service of teacher-training institutions is in follow-up. Some institutions do have a policy of sending out evaluation sheets to the schools asking for information on the teacher after he has gotten well into his job. It seems extremely important in those cases in which the evaluation shows weakness that a representative of the college visit the teacher on the job to help to fortify him and to counsel with him on how to meet situations as they develop. A visit from a friendly counselor in time of stress often either saves a teacher to the profession or makes him a stronger teacher than he otherwise would be.

Many schools employ few beginning teachers. To the extent possible, should not the teacher-training institution placement offices keep files and credentials of promising young teachers up to date? Should not those who prove their worth in their first positions have the help of the teachers colleges in promotion to better positions, and cannot this help be given without injuring the relationship between the college and the school in which the teacher is employed?

In considering the staffing of public schools in the State of Illinois as a whole, one finds a number of discouraging factors. Teacher-training institutions in Illinois do not prepare an adequate number of teachers to fill all of the openings, and some schools find themselves in the position of either turning to other states or employing poorly prepared personnel. The last legislature has again legalized certification for teaching in elementary schools of persons with two years of college who pass a qualifying examination. Many communities are continuing to employ teachers at the lowest annual salary permitted by the state, $3,200, which is approximately $1,000 below the average for beginning bachelor degree teachers who graduate from Illinois State Normal University. The increasing demands on the public schools caused by increased enrollments and extension of services are responsible in part for deterioration in practice.

Our society is so constituted today as to demand superior service to youth. Should teacher-training institutions and the State of Illinois not be looking toward a minimum professional preparation standard of five years? Undergraduate education would then be concentrated in liberal arts studies with desirable balance between general education and preparation in a major field. The fifth year, leading to the master's degree, would include further study in the major field with methodology and practice teaching professional education concen-

trated in this final semester. Teachers so trained who have worked as members of the Bloom staff have done excellent jobs.

Many of us serving in administrative capacities in Illinois are disturbed over the number of classroom teachers who hold master's degrees in public school administration. The American Association of School Administrators and the National Association of Secondary School Principals are now attempting to answer the question of what an administrator should look like. How shall he be selected and trained? Should not training for administration start only after a person has demonstrated success in a field of teaching? Should not the training include internship in the field as well as sound instruction? Should not institutions which prepare administrators at the graduate level have strong departments in public administration, finance and accounting, law, public health, and human behavior? These are questions which teacher-training institutions must realistically face if they are to offer maximum service.

In approaching the end of my remarks, I must turn again to the ferment existing in the educational scene at the present time and the opportunity it presents to teacher-training institutions to be of service to the public schools. The launching of an earth satellite into outer space by Russia has had a greater impact on American educational thought than any event since Pearl Harbor, which occurred sixteen years ago today. All of the children presently enrolled in elementary and high schools have spent their complete lives in a world of tension resulting from hot wars and cold wars. Our country in its various fields of endeavor and through its leadership in agriculture, science, business, art, education, and other fields, has established a pattern of life and accomplishment which seemed quite acceptable to most until Sputnik appeared on the horizon. In the mad search for direction which is now taking place, much thought is turning to public education. *The Wall Street Journal* of Monday, December 2, 1957, had this to say in an editorial:

> Defense needs will also be a potent argument for the government to do something about the schools. The clamor for federal handouts both for scholarships and construction, already loud, will grow more insistent. If not enough scientists and engineers to suit the planners are forthcoming, in time there may be demands for the government to set educational standards and, in effect, direct what students shall pursue careers. All this is admittedly taking an extremely dark view, posing as it does a regimented society in which the economy will have lost such of its drive and the people will have lost sizable freedoms. Yet the embryonic shape of some of these developments is already visible. And one of the insidious things about this possible future is that the surrender of liberties would be gradual and each surrender would be made to seem necessary at the time. With each, the next would be easier to accept. . . . regardless of the need for scientists, for example, education is not and

> must not be a federal creature, if we are to maintain a free society. The education reform that is necessary will be effective only if it is done by the communities and the states. . . What is necessary is to understand that our survival as a free society depends not only on how we meet the Soviet challenge but on how we meet the American Challenge.

We in the public schools turn to teacher-training institutions for leadership and direction as these matters of public policy affecting public education are being met and dealt with.

Is this not a time in our history for all of us to tighten our belts and come to grips with a most pressing problem of the day—"How best recruit and educate the teachers of tomorrow?"

DISCUSSION SECTIONS

LOCAL RESEARCH—A TECHNIQUE FOR IMPROVING INSTRUCTION

Speaker—EARL H. DIEKEN, *Curriculum Director, New Lennox*

Chairman-Recorder—CECILIA J. LAUBY, *Illinois State Normal University*

Local research as it is being carried on in the classrooms of the Lincoln-Way High School at New Lennox was presented by Mr. Earl H. Dieken, Curriculum Director of that school.

Mr. Dieken emphasized the following points concerning local research as it has been carried on in their school:

1. Local research must be simple and have short term goals.
2. Local research is conducted in the classroom in connection with the daily teaching-learning activities that are occurring in that particular classroom.
3. Local research is an attempt to analyze more carefully some specific phase of a teaching-learning situation in an effort to determine whether or not this phase is accomplishing what is expected.
4. The results of local research have implications only for the particular teacher and group with whom it is being conducted. Seldom, if ever, are these results applicable to other groups or other teachers even within this particular school.

Local research as it has been conducted at Lincoln-Way involves the following steps: (a) being aware of a problem area, (b) focusing attention on a specific problem, (c) formulating a hypothesis (a reasonable guess that predicts an outcome), (d) testing the hypothesis (constructing a plan to collect the data), (e) obtaining the evidence (using questionnaires, tests, and so on), (f) drawing generalizations or conclusions from the data collected, and (g) retesting if necessary.

Some of the problem areas studied at Lincoln-Way include the following: Is there any kind of relationship between student behavior and weather? How can the quality and quantity of class discussion be improved? How can students be made more aware of the importance of an adequate diet? What are the best methods of giving assignments in algebra? What is the best type of criticism in oral speech making? What is the effectiveness of note-taking in history classes?

The purposes of local research as it has been conducted at Lincoln-Way are (a) to develop the curiosity of the teachers toward the progress of the students, (b) to stimulate creativeness in the individual teacher and the particular classroom, (c) to implement the in-service professional growth of the faculty, (d) to interest teachers in research and professional reading particularly of professional research, and (e) to help teachers analyze their own teaching. In the

opinion of many who have participated in this local research, it is one step toward professionalizing the profession.

There seems little doubt that the stimulus given by such activities as those being carried on in this school under the term "local research" will serve to challenge teachers to look at themselves a little more objectively. As with many good educational practices, this type of activity has been conducted in many schools by many good teachers for a long time, but they have not been labeled "local research." The importance of such activities lies in the professional stimulus engendered in those who involve themselves in it, as well as the benefits which acrue to the students who study with such teachers.

Those who are preparing new members to join our professional ranks should encourage the neophyte to take a broad look at the profession as a whole. These young people need to be helped to learn how to analyze their own teaching-learning situation. They need to learn many methods of collecting data. Most of all, it is quite important that they learn the limitations of such research, to know that such studies do not have the controls of pure research and therefore the results cannot be applied to broad populations. However, teacher educators can stimulate the growth of all members of the profession by encouraging them to participate in activities such as these which today are being called "local research" and prepare the beginning teacher to engage in such activities.

TEACHING CHEMISTRY WITH USE OF SEMI-MICRO LABORATORY TECHNIQUES

Speaker—ALLEN M. BAKER, *teacher of chemistry, assisted by* WILLIAM BRACKEN *and* DON FURGESON, *students at Hinsdale Township High School*

Chairman-Recorder—DAVERNE DALLUGE, *Illinois State Normal University*

The semi-micro technique differs from the more common micro method in that much smaller equipment and smaller quantities of chemicals are used. For example, the usual chemical reactions are carried out in drop quantities on glass microscope slides or on depression spot plates. Test evaporations are made on glass slides or on a 2½ inch watch glass. Precipitates are separated from solutions by the centrifuge and then decanted, or a pipette is used to remove the liquid.

Most chemicals and reagents used are carried in the student reagent tray. These reagent trays contain six 30-ml. dropper bottles in which the fundamental acids and bases are kept, six 15-ml. dropper bottles containing the more common liquid reagents, and twenty-eight 8-ml. vials which hold all necessary solid reagents.

It was pointed out that the same chemistry was taught and that the method discussed was a change only in the techniques used in the laboratory.

The fact that smaller quantities are used also results in a substantial saving so far as the cost of materials and equipment is concerned. It was reported that a school could provide for a class of twenty-four students at a cost of approximately $800.00.

In the discussion it was pointed out that the following were considered as advantages of the semi-micro method:

1. All but the most bulky and seldom used equipment necessary for the student laboratory work is conveniently, safely, and compactly kept in a small space. It is easily accessible at all times and the storage in no way impairs the use of the room as a regular classroom. At the Hinsdale Township High School the laboratory equipment for 108 students requires only 22 square feet of floor space. At the beginning of the laboratory period each student procures his "Tote-Tray," carries it to his desk, and is ready to start his laboratory work in a matter of a few minutes.
2. The use of smaller quantities leads to the development of skills of exactness and neatness as well as orderly and clean methods of procedure—the techniques needed in science.
3. It creates an atmosphere in the laboratory in which the teacher can conduct a course that will supplement as well as correlate the laboratory work with the recitation period.
4. It eliminates waste and careless use of chemicals. Each student uses a beaker for his waste materials. At the end of the period the beaker is emptied at a centrally located sink or waste jar.
5. Group work is eliminated. Each student has all equipment and materials necessary for each experiment and can complete the work on an individual basis, eliminating group work, which often means that the more aggressive student does most of the actual manipulation of laboratory equipment.
6. It allows for a flexible program. With each student having a complete set of materials and equipment it is not necessary for all to do the same experiment at the same time. This does much toward providing for differences in student abilities.
7. Since the instructor does not need to dispense chemicals he can act in his full capacity as a teacher during the laboratory period, being free to advise and direct students in the atmosphere of a well-ordered classroom.

During the presentation and discussion the two students from Hinsdale High School were busy conducting experiments using the semi-micro method. Included in the experiments they completed were titration, precipitation of the metallic ions using hydrogen sulfide, and the preparation of chlorine.

Also made available to the group were photographs showing the classroom and laboratory at the Hinsdale High School and a complete display of all equipment necessary in teaching chemistry with use of the semi-micro method.

TEACHING MATHEMATICS WITH A MATHEMATICS LABORATORY

Speaker—RICHARD MARIANA, *Teacher in John Mills School, Elmwood Park*

Chairman-Recorder—ETHEL STEIN, *Illinois State Normal University*

Through a description of the mathematics program, demonstration with materials like the buzz boards, models, various instruments, and a showing of slides made from pictures taken of the work done by pupils in the John Mills School in Elmwood Park, administrators and teachers attending the annual Roundup at Illinois State Normal University on December 7, gained useful information concerning the teaching of mathematics in a laboratory.

Pupils in the seventh and eighth grades of this school make extensive use of the school mathematics laboratory in addition to a variety of textbooks. Local business and industrial firms in the community are likewise used as a laboratory for guided learning experiences.

The purpose of the mathematics laboratory is to give students an opportunity to gain a correct and thorough understanding of the meaning of mathematical principles through experimentation with a great variety of materials and instruments. Mathematics has to be presented as a system of principles which have been previously mastered. This teaching may be likened to the framework for a skyscraper which must rest on a firm foundation. These fundamentals should be applied to real life problems.

During the five forty-minute periods a week, the students have a new principle introduced on Monday; spend Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday in a work situation; and evaluate on Friday. The class is divided into thirds, so that one-third of the class may work one day a week in the mathematics laboratory while the instructor helps the other members of the class. Thus over a three-day period all the members of the class may work in the laboratory.

Once a month the students in small groups interview key people in businesses and industries in the community to learn how mathematics functions in a real life situation.

Advantages in using a laboratory are that the pupils are highly motivated; that they learn how to define goals, organize their thoughts, weigh facts before making judgements, and conduct drill activities in a functional situation; and that they are developing inner control and character as good citizens. They are involved in problem-solving which cuts across subject matter lines.

Problems which may arise in setting up a mathematics laboratory are to have the money to equip a mathematics laboratory, to provide a flexible schedule for trips into the community, and to find a teacher who is enthusiastic and prepared to work with pupils in a laboratory.

The chief significance for teacher education is to prepare teachers

who can use the problem-solving approach and the scientific method, and who will have a broad background of knowledge and an understanding of the needs and interests of adolescents. The teachers of tomorrow need to develop a way of thinking, a don't-go-by-the-book, let's-try-and-see attitude, which they may impart to their pupils.

TELEVISION AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL AID

Speaker—WANDA MITCHELL, *Teacher of Speech and Director of the Experimental Program in Use of Television at Evanston Township High School*

Chairman-Recorder—H. A. MOORE, *Illinois State Normal University*

Miss Mitchell prefaced her talk by a few remarks as to why she became interested in the use of television in the classroom. She was particularly interested in eliminating some of the repetition incidental to teaching several sections of the same course. Television sounded like a good possible way to do this. As a result of her interest she became director of the experiment.

In the first stages of the experiment negative and positive claims for television were heard. The following negative and positive claims were expressed.

Negative Claims

1. Television cannot take the place of a good classroom teacher.
2. Television teaching is too impersonal.
3. Television is not suitable for starting the "spark" of learning.
4. Television can teach content but cannot change and develop attitudes.
5. Television cannot do anything that films cannot do cheaper and better.

Positive Claims

1. There were too many claims to enumerate at the meeting, but the full list may be obtained by writing to Dr. H. Kumata, Educational Radio and TV Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan, for the booklet entitled "Inventory of Educational Television." ($1.00) This booklet lists all of the educational TV experiments in progress in the United States.
2. Students can see better with television.
3. Television can be taken to inaccessible spots.
4. Television can be used as a substitute for some types of field trips.
5. Television can be used to extend areas of learning to areas outside the school.

6. Television can be used for instruction of new teachers for teacher training.

As a result of reading these claims six questions were foremost in the minds of the Evanston Committee on Television. They were as follows:

1. Could television aid in handling larger groups?
2. Could production be handled by teachers and students?
3. What would be the approximate cost?
4. Does television teaching require special methods?
5. What would be the reaction of students, teachers, and parents to television teaching?
6. Are tools for measuring television learning adequate?

In order to try to provide answers for some of the preceding questions, two extremes were chosen as areas to investigate. One area, typing, was chosen because the teaching was mostly impersonal. The other area, speech, was chosen as the opposite extreme because it is almost 100 per cent personal. The Research Director for Statistics and Evaluations agreed to handle the research data gathered by the experiment and agreed to set up th conditions for a statistically sound experiment.

The equipment at Evanston is student operated except for the services of a full-time engineer. Each student participated in a three-week training session. Students learned to operate the cameras adequately in three days or less. It took much more time to teach them what to take a picture of. This was done by making them teach short lessons on camera.

In the typing class the teacher made no change in the standard lesson plans. An inter-com. audio and video circuit was set up between the two typing rooms. At the end of the year the class which had been in the viewing room had learned slightly more than the class in the originating room, but the difference was not statistically significant.

This year two shorthand classes have been moved into one room and the TV camera is being used more or less like a microscope in the one room. Data is not available yet on this experiment.

In the English-Speech class experiment three classes were linked into one group by audio and video inter-communications. The originating room was alternated for the three groups. Every lesson plan was changed to suit video emphasis. Difficulty was experienced with activity shots in the area of speech and English instruction. One studio was equipped for teacher practice in front of the camera before a lesson was taught in front of a class.

All participation in the experiment was voluntary. Teachers in several other areas, chiefly in science, have also tried to use television.

The experiment was designed to test as many claims as possible. Evanston is now in its second year of actual experimentation in the classroom, at a cost of $28,000-30,000. A Ford Foundation grant helps to finance the experiments.

As a result of their efforts at Evanston the participants are willing to say that they have learned the following:

1. Television can serve larger numbers of students than are usually served in a class.
2. Television provides a front row seat for everybody.
3. Television makes possible a more efficient use of time.
4. Television movies are very satisfactory.
5. Television makes possible a greater use of talent with teacher teams presenting a course.
6. Television as such is neither bad nor good. It is only how we use it that is bad or good.
7. Television may be used in places other than the regular classroom. Some examples of other uses are as follows:
   a. to aid in registration procedures,
   b. to administer standardized tests,
   c. to observe group psychotherapy,
   d. to provide vicarious experience for the educable mentally handicapped.
8. Television may be used in a methods course in a special way when one camera is on the teacher, one on the class, and one on the center of interest at the moment, with each observing student having a choice of which one he wants to watch at any given moment.

THE COLLEGE-HIGH SCHOOL PLACEMENT PROGRAM WITH EMPHASIS ON COURSES FOR ABLE STUDENTS

Speaker—CHARLES O. AUSTIN, JR., *Principal of Rock Island Senior High School*

Chairman-Recorder—ALICE EIKENBERRY, *Illinois State Normal University*

The Rock Island Senior High School Plan for a curriculum program is an effective answer to those critics who delight in describing secondary education as education for mediocrity, according to Mr. Charles O. Austin Jr., principal of the Rock Island Senior High School. At the same time, it offers no comfort to those who yearn to turn the educational clock back to the narrow curriculum for the few, so characteristic of pre-World War I days. Good citizenship and performance ability are the criteria for the Plan, Mr. Austin said. What happens to the product is the test of education.

Although the purpose of the Plan is to develop the abilities of all students, unique opportunities are provided for those at the upper end

of the ability scale. Provision for the gifted started several years ago with the division of the senior English program into a college preparatory course and a terminal course. The chemistry program was divided into a college preparatory course for those students planning careers in science and engineering and a special course for girls interested in entering nursing. This division permits the regular chemistry program to do a more effective job of preparing prospective scientists and engineers.

The outstanding feature of the Rock Island Plan, as it pertains to the able student, is the opportunity to take college courses as a part of the college placement program. The gifted student stays with his own social group in high school and at the same time receives college credit or advanced placement for such of his high school work as is geared to the college level.

The first course organized under the college placement program was a senior course in world history which is offered as an elective to college-bound students. A college textbook and techniques common to college teaching are used. Follow-up studies show that students consider this course the most valuable offered in high school for college preparation.

Plans are underway for additional advanced placement courses in American history, mathematics, chemistry, and languages. Students will be limited to two advanced placement programs at one time.

The program raises standards of scholarship at the secondary level. It challenges the able student and enables him, in many cases, to earn college credit before he actually enters college. More and more colleges are giving both credit and advanced placement to high school students who do satisfactory work in such courses and on the advanced placement examination.

Terminal education is provided through programs in industrial arts, diversified occupations, distributive education, business education, and home economics. A two-hour course in secretarial training, which includes advanced work in typing and shorthand and practice with office machines, prepares girls for office jobs upon high school graduation.

The Rock Island Plan is an example of how one senior high school is meeting the need for the best kind of education for all students. By challenging every level of ability, secondary education is being upgraded.

THREE-LEVEL DIVISION OF COMPOSITION AND LITERATURE IN A SMALL HIGH SCHOOL

Speaker—Rex Millikin *for Charles H. Rivenburg, English, Geneseo*

Chairman-Recorder—Theodore B. Almy, *Illinois State Normal University*

During the past twenty years, there has evolved at Geneseo Senior High School a plan for the improvement of instruction in English. Mr. Charles H. Rivenburg, chairman of the department of English, prepared a paper describing this plan, which is now actually in operation. Illness prevented Mr. Rivenburg's appearing at the Roundup, however, and his paper was presented by Mr. Rex Millikin, superintendent of schools at Geneseo.

The department of English at Geneseo divides all of its offerings into separate composition and literature courses. Composition courses meet on Mondays and Tuesdays, and the literature courses meet on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Separate grades are given for composition and literature, and the courses are passed or failed separately.

The students, all of whom are required to complete three years of high school English, are placed in three separate ability groupings. Those beginning ninth grade students whose reading achievement, as measured by scores earned on the Iowa Silent Reading Test, is retarded more than two years, are placed in remedial sections. All other freshmen are assigned to regular ninth grade English sections. At the conclusion of the freshman year, approximately the upper twenty per cent of the students are selected upon the bases of reading achievement, grades, and general maturity for acceleration to junior English, skipping tenth grade English entirely. In the junior year, these accelerated students take senior English, and in the senior year they take a fifth year of English which consists of creative writing and world literature.

Remedial sections are scheduled for both the ninth and tenth years; regular sections are scheduled for each of the four years. It is possible for a student to be promoted from a remedial section or demoted from an accelerated section as the occasion demands.

The requirements for composition are rather rigid. Each student must write an acceptable research paper of some five thousand words during his sophomore year and a similar paper of ten thousand words during his junior year. Each student must also meet certain definite standards in written composition. These specific standards are presented to all students in mimeographed form as a *Fatality List*.

The teachers and administrators at Geneseo feel that the plan is successful. It helps to provide for individual differences and to keep standards high for gifted students. They point to the fact that in recent

years no graduate of Geneseo High School who has attended the University of Illinois has failed to pass the university's freshman English composition test.

There are some scheduling difficulties involved in the plan; skipping back and forth between literature and composition creates occasional confusion; and if the state of Illinois ever requires four years of English in the secondary school, the entire program will have to be revised, since many students use their senior year as a time cushion for make-up work.

ADJUSTMENT OF PROGRAM FOR GIFTED CHILDREN IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM IN THE CHAMPAIGN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Speaker—JAMES J. GALLAGHER, *Associate Professor of Education, University of Illinois*

Chairman-Recorder—LOUISE FARMER, *Illinois State Normal University*

Professor James J. Gallagher of the University of Illinois explained that the problem of teaching the gifted child had been a subject of study by educators in Champaign for some eight years and that in 1954 they began a concentrated study in cooperation with the Urbana Public Schools and the State Department of Public Instruction.

The purpose of the study was to discover particular needs of gifted children and to work out a program for meeting these needs in the classroom. Classroom teachers recommended children they thought might be candidates for study. Teacher judgment and group intelligence tests were the bases for their recommendations.

The next step was to secure approval of parents. All parents were interested and willing to have their children studied though with some minor reservations. Some parents were concerned, for example, about acceleration and did not wish this for their child.

Each child was given an involved battery of tests, including the Wechsler and the Binet. Fifty-four children who scored 150 or above were selected for the project study. These youngsters were in grades two through five as it was believed that early identification and guidance pay greater dividends.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the program was the case study approach used in planning a program for each child. The study team included a person from the Institute for Research and Exceptional Children at the University of Illinois, the school psychologist, the director of special education, and the elementary supervisor and curriculum director. It was this team—Mr. James Gallagher, Mr. Herbert Boyd, Mrs. Merle Karnes, and Mrs. Margaret Greenman—

who, together with Mrs. Veda Larson, a classroom teacher, composed the panel. It had been the task of this group to study test results, anecdotal records, and the particular home and school situation, and to work out a realistic plan of recommendations for each individual.

In a very few cases it was deemed wise to accelerate a child and in a few others to shift children to a different school environment where they might find more competition and challenge.

In all cases there was a conference with the teacher and principal concerned. The director of special education was the contact person. The classroom teacher and the parents worked together to outline a definite program. The curriculum committee studying giftedness made suggestions to classroom teachers.

The teacher on the panel gave a very interesting report on the program. She had planned to help one very bright youngster who had minor emotional and adjustment problems and who was not achieving as he should. She found at first that she had to manipulate situations in order to put this child in a responsible or leadership role. As he became more sure of himself he also became more acceptable to the children and was chosen by them rather than by the teacher.

This teacher not only provided learning situations that would broaden the child's experience but also those that would encourage him to go much deeper into a subject than would normally be expected. Creative experiences had to be of a nature that he would not consider childish or a waste of time.

The Champaign three-year study came to a close in June of 1957. A follow-up study is being done. Some interesting things have been learned about giftedness, and some kind of publication of these findings is anticipated.

A study of giftedness could well be a part of any school's curriculum work. It is important, one panel member said, that we train teachers who recognize the characteristics of the gifted child and who know how to provide suitable learning experiences. It is also important that we train administrators and supervisors who will not tie the teacher's hands by insisting on page-to-page coverage of the textbook. They must also realize the tremendous importance of having materials and supplies fitted to needs and interests of these exceptional children.

PROVIDING VARIED LEARNING EXPERIENCES THROUGH GROUPING

Speakers—KENNETH S. HAMMER, *Superintendent, and* ELDEN BETHARD, *Assistant Superintendent, Morris*

Chairman-Recorder—JOHN L. REUSSER, *Illinois State Normal University*

Description of a plan for grouping children in the elementary school at Morris was presented by Mr. Kenneth S. Hammer, superintendent, and Mr. Eldon Bethard, Assistant Superintendent. The plan provides for sectioning of children largely on the basis of chronological age in grades two to six. Each section is a quite typical self-contained classroom with twenty-seven to thirty-five pupils and one teacher. The children in each of these sections are then divided into three groups for work in reading and arithmetic, but work together as one large group in all other areas. The three groups are formed on the basis of mental age and consist of about 25 per cent of the pupils for the high group, 50 per cent for the average, and 25 per cent for the low group.

The high group completes the regular work of the grade in reading and arithmetic in about one fourth of the year. After that they have more advanced supplementary work for the remainder of the year. The average group takes approximately the full year to complete the work of a grade, while the low group progresses much more slowly.

In grades seven and eight the superior students are segregated from the others in science and mathematics. They finish the ordinary work of both seventh and eighth grades during the seventh year. The eighth year the same students take algebra and elementary chemistry and physics. In all other subjects, such as literature and social studies, they follow the regular curriculum first and then take more work at the same level. This superior group will take geometry and more advanced science in the ninth grade.

The pupils seem happy with this plan of grouping, and there have been no adverse reactions from parents. The teachers, however, have mixed feelings about the plan. Some are afraid of the changes involved and the extra time required to make the plan work. Results in the lower grades have shown that there are very satisfactory gains in reading and arithmetic, particularly in relation to the mental age. Children in the highest group have gained more in relation to their mental ages than those in the lowest. There is therefore good reason to believe that this plan makes possible more nearly maximum achievement for all boys and girls in reading and arithmetic.

Even though teaching methods are not changed and there is merely a change in organization, the plan presents some difficulties and most teachers will need help. The plan seems to be somewhat more

difficult to administer in the upper grades because of the greater difference between the achievement of the highest and lowest groups.

This method of providing for varied learning experiences is an experiment that might well be carried on in other schools for further testing. The teachers colleges might well prepare outgoing graduates more specifically for this kind of work.

UNGRADED READING PROGRAM IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Speaker—C. H. PYGMAN, *Superintendent of Elementary Schools, Maywood.*

Chairman-Recorder—HELEN M. NANCE, *Illinois State Normal University*

Description of the Program

Mr. Pygman explained that the purposes of the ungraded reading program which he was describing were two-fold: (1) to meet individual differences among children, and (2) to provide a developmental sequential reading program throughout the eight-year elementary school.

During a series of curriculum meetings concerned with these purposes teachers met in primary, intermediate, and upper-grade sections. Ideas were exchanged, curriculum materials were selected, and some general principals were agreed upon to carry out an experiment in reading. Some of the guiding principles formulated by the staff of teachers were as follows:

1. The reading program should be continuous and sequential, providing successful progress for each child according to his individual ability.
2. Failure does not promote the best in the growth of the whole child.
3. Children's progress in reading should be appraised in terms of each child's ability and not in comparison with other individuals.
4. Pressure should be removed from both teachers and pupils to cover materials characterized in a rigid reading program.

Flexible time schedules were in evidence, revised parental reports were made available, and the elimination of grades *one, two,* and *three* were indicated as a primary room. The primary room children were arranged into eight levels of reading ability. Level one—reading readiness experiences; level two—pre-primer; level three—primer; level four—first reader; level five—second reader; level six—a second reader which is more difficult; level seven—a third reader; level eight—a third reader of more difficulty. Each September a child begins

at the point where he left off in June, which eliminates a grade placement or promotion or failure aspects to the program. In this way there is no stigma for failure, and at the same time the program helps to care for the fast learner.

Several sets of reading texts are available at each level, in order to care for individual differences. Most children progress through the eight levels in three years; however, some children require four years to complete all eight levels in this primary room. About fifteen per cent of the children remain in the fourth year of this primary room, even though there was a large turnover of children and a large turnover of faculty members. Therefore, some children remain in the primary ungraded room for four years, while most children progress to what is commonly known as fourth grade. In this way retention and failure are unknown factors.

Each September teachers are assigned to children according to their varied levels rather than to a a uniform number of children to teachers. In all of these situations teachers have volunteered to the point that the entire faculty of these elementary schools has volunteered to work in this type of experimental program.

The intermediate school consists of grades four, five, and six, and each teacher in these grades finds that two to three reading groups are necessary to meet the needs of these pupils. Sufficient basic and supplementary materials are provided in these rooms so that children can work increasingly at higher or lower levels.

The upper grades consist of grades seven and eight, and again the reading teacher organizes her class into two or three reading groups if necessary. Mr. Pygman indicated that in the upper grades there are still a few students who are using second, third, and fourth grade material. However, his program has shown that by the time children have completed an eight-year program in the Maywood schools, sixty-eight to seventy per cent are reading on an eighth grade level, or above, according to the Iowa Reading Tests. Twenty per cent are reading on a fifth or sixth grade level, and from eight to ten per cent are reading below a fifth grade level.

Many conferences with parents, which include conferences concerning the reading tests, are an important feature of this program, and parents seem to understand and think highly of this particular reading program. Mr. Pygman reported the following conclusions:

1. The program reduces teacher tension to cover material.
2. Teachers are enthusiastic concerning the progress shown among children.
3. More supplementary material in addition to the basic textbooks are utilized.
4. The elementary principals are educational leaders, since they spend a great deal of time in the classrooms observing and participating in the reading program. These principals have secretaries to care for clerical work, and so have a great deal of time to carry on an in-service education program with teachers.

Implications for Teacher Education

1. Observations in the Maywood Elementary School would be advisable as one type of experience from which students might gain a great deal of information and from which beginning teachers might gain confidence in trying a similar experimental program.
2. Since reading is a vital part of the elementary curriculum, teacher-education institutions should provide experiences in teaching reading as a skill subject in addition to understanding reading as related to other areas of the curriculum.
3. Values of action research, experimentation, and evaluation are important factors in every course in the preparation of teachers, and these values should be implemented in all teacher-education courses.
4. The practical values of grouping children within classrooms may be considered in courses dealing with most areas of the curriculum in the elementary school.
5. This program should help clarify the approach to a curriculum designed around an understanding of children.

A FUNCTIONING AREA PROGRAM OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Speaker—C. LEWIS MARTIN, *Director of LaGrange Special Education Program*

Chairman-Recorder—LILLIE MAE RICKMAN, *Illinois State Normal University*

Mr. C. Lewis Martin presented a summary of the establishment and operation of the area program of special education of which he is director. A major problem in developing a complete special education program in any local school district, he explained, is the distribution and frequency of children needing the services offered by special education. In order to provide services for some types of exceptional children, school administrators have found it more feasible to send children to neighboring districts maintaining a class for this type of exceptional child than to establish a class locally. Recent legislation (1957) has been enacted that, it is hoped, will make it possible for local districts to provide a more coordinated system of services. Two new provisions which will help effect this objective are as follows:

1. It is now mandatory that the "Local School District shall: Take an annual census of all children described in the classi-

fications under the direction of the County Superintendent of Schools and on forms prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction."

2. It is permissive to enter into "Joint Agreements Between School Districts: School boards may enter into joint agreements to establish programs for special education of exceptional children. They may jointly provide the needed facilities and employ a director and other professional workers. Or one district under the Joint Agreement may employ the director or other professional workers and be reimbursed by the other districts."

Prior to this change in legislation, the West Suburban Superintendents, at the request of Mr. James E. Pease, LaGrange, District 102, had a series of meetings to consider the need of establishing a cooperative Department of Special Education. A special committee was appointed by this group to consolidate the various proposals into a statement for consideration by the school districts concerned. The proposals of the committee are summarized below.

1. **Administrative District**

   One district, which shall be referred to in this proposal as "The Administrative District" shall employ a director of special education who will serve all of the cooperating districts in the administration of the program of special education in those districts.

   This Administrative District will provide an office and a secretary for the Director, and will pay for the costs of this office, including the salaries.

   The Administrative District will maintain an accounting system which will separate the costs of this activity so that they can be accurately prorated among the cooperating districts.

2. **Paying the Costs**

   The costs incurred by the Administrative District in providing the services of a Director of Special Education, will be reimbursed by the cooperating districts as follows:

   a. Each district will submit to the administrative district the same information on average daily attendance that it submits for its State Aid Claim.

   b. The A.D.A. of all the cooperating schools will be added together and used as the divisor to determine the per pupil cost of the administration of the special education program.

   c. The administrative district will then bill the cooperating districts for their prorated share of this cost.

3. **The Director**

The director will be employed by the administrative district and will be directly responsible to the Superintendent of that district and through him to its Board of Education.

The scope and limits of the Director's duties, responsibilities, and authority with respect to the cooperating districts will be defined by a steering committee composed of the superintendents of the participating districts or their representatives.

Initially the duties may include such phases of the work as studying the needs of the districts, finding districts to operate the classes that are needed and helping to establish them, finding suitable teachers and supervising them, determining eligibility of pupils for enrollment, and counseling with superintendents of cooperating districts and with parents.

4. **Operating District**

One or more districts will establish one or more classes in special education.

A district which has agreed to operate a class will be known as an Operating District, will organize the class, hire the teacher, and provide the facilities for the class. The Operating school district will pay all of the costs of the class and will maintain an accounting system which will separate the costs.

5. **Cost of Operation**

The total cost of the class will be divided by the A.D.E. of the pupils in the class, and the district in which each pupil resides will reimburse the Operating district for the costs of the children from that district, less state aid available and collectable on those children.

In conclusion Mr. Martin stated that the foregoing report and proposal of the committee were adopted and that following their adoption the Area Department of Special Education was formed. District 102, LaGrange, was designated as the Administrative District, and Mr. Martin was employed as Director of Special Education on a half-time basis as of July 1, 1956.

After the plan of procedure and administration was determined, surveys were made in the cooperating districts to determine the number of pupils needing special education services, available and existing resources, classroom space, and the teachers needed.

The increase in the number and variety of classroom programs offered for the school year 1957-58 over those available during 1956-57 give some indication of the success of the plan to date. A survey of these increased offerings shows that in 1956-57 four special classes

were in operation in two of the fourteen districts. In 1957-58 there are thirteen special classes in five of the fourteen elementary and three high school districts.

Following this presentation by Mr. Martin, members of the group asked pertinent questions and participated in discussions relative to the problems which have been encountered by this group to date and which might be anticipated in setting up similar plans in more rural communities.

REMEDIAL READING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Speaker—RUTH WALLIS, *Reading Supervisor, Pekin*

Chairman-Recorder—LARRY HAFNER, *Illinois State Normal University*

In discussing the corrective reading program at Pekin, Miss Wallis called on some teachers and parents for individual presentations. Two mothers, Mrs. Soffietti and Mrs. Emmons, each reported remarkable gains in interest and reading skill in their boys after they were enrolled in the special program. Mrs. Nall, a new teacher in the system, expressed her appreciation for the help given by the reading supervisor and her satisfaction with the parent-supervisor relationship which allows for communication between those in the best position to help the child. Two principals, Miss Elizabeth Malcahy and Mr. Walter Karrick, pointed out the availability of tests and test analyses by the supervisor. Cooperation of the principal, they felt, was an important factor in the program by coordinating the work of teachers, supervisor, and parents.

Though the emphasis is chiefly on the lower elementary grades, some corrective work is still needed at upper grade levels. A suitable test is used to identify reading needs. The Gates-Peardon booklets of corrective exercises are worked at home at the rate of one per day. On Friday results are checked in school.

Important points mentioned by Miss Wallis included the following:

1. Children's librarian helps children choose books.
2. The teacher collects, interprets, and organizes data on child.
3. Gates Primary Reading Tests are used.
4. Scores from following types of tests are entered on Individual Summary Sheet: readiness; basic series reading; informal; commercial diagnostic.

5. Pintner Intelligence Tests are used. (Results of these tests are quite similar to the Binet results for the same children.)
6. Children like Pintner tests and basic series reading tests.
7. Most children in the program are average and above in intelligence.
8. The teacher points out ways parents can help child learn the Dolch Basic Sight Words at home.
9. Parents and children know child's progress by record he keeps.
10. Schools keep complete, up-to-date Cumulative Record.
11. They check child's progress each week.
12. A gold star is placed on chart by each title of book read.

The strong points of this type of program seem to be:

1. "Everybody" knows what is going on. Parents, child, and staff cooperate.
2. Parents are shown how to help children.
3. Reading is made enjoyable by correcting specific defects and by allowing children to read in their interest field on their level.
4. The basic sight words are clinched.
5. Confidence is restored in parent and child.
6. Misconceptions about school, learning, and child's trouble are cleared up.
7. Excellent means of pinpointing difficulties and clearing them up are used.
8. Children's difficulties are "nipped in the bud" before they have a chance to do great damage.

In adopting this type of approach, one might consider the previous clues plus one more: the selection of a well-trained supervisor. A degree plus several reading courses and a psychological testing courses are recommended. It is possible to select a capable teacher and help her to get the in-service training necessary.

It was pointed out that the implications for teacher education are obvious. One might be emphasized: "Every teacher a teacher of reading"; ergo "reading instruction for every teacher and prospective teacher." This requirement could improve articulation and help narrow the gap between achievement and achievement expectancy at all levels in all areas.

EXPERIMENTATION WITH INDIVIDUALIZED READING AS A TEACHING METHOD

Panel—J. Weston Harding, Winifred Kearney, Jayne Miller, Sarah Henebry, Lois Gray, Henrietta Baird

Chairman-Recorder—Ethel Wooley, *Illinois State Normal University*

Mr. J. Weston Harding, Principal of the Harrison School in Peoria, opened the panel discussion by stating that the teachers of that school are endeavoring to meet the reading needs of their pupils through an individualized reading program. In the initial approach, he said, attention was focused on the following aspects:

Reviewing the literature on individualized reading programs

Studying data on each child's achievement tests

Retesting vocabulary previously used in textbooks and the Dolch list

Locating special needs of each child

Determining reading levels and exploring reading interests of each child

The teachers faced the problems of:

Providing sufficient and varied reading materials

Preparing extra materials on varying levels

Guiding interesting and worth-while independent work

Aiding each child to further develop self-direction and self-control

Informing parents of the program and reporting progress of each child

Finding a satisfactory amount of time for each child to read individually

Choosing one's own reading at one's own level, the teachers found, is the heart of individualized reading and a strong motivating factor. The children react in a variety of ways:

Tell stories or passages of special interest to the group

Write formal or informal reports, summaries, skits

Discuss stories with the group

Dramatize stories and make puppets, shadow boxes, movies, poems, pictures, tape recordings of stories

Perform group and individual research

Grouping in this program is flexible and used for planning, discussing, sharing, reading to others, making projects, or working on skills. Materials and activities are selected with reference to maturity levels and individual needs. Basic needs of children are considered in guiding and planning learning experiences.

Evaluation is cooperative and continuous, and includes testing, self-evaluation, and discussion. It is geared to developmental levels of the children and not to arbitrary standards of achievement unrelated to the needs of the children or to the school program.

In the judgment of these teachers individualized reading may not be the answer to all their reading problems, but their findings indicate increased satisfaction in reading and a more wholesome attitude toward reading on the part of the children. Because of a more sensible use of skills, increased interest and better comprehension are evident to parents as well as teachers. It is their belief that instruction is better adapted to individual differences through this approach.

There is no escaping the fact that the teacher is the key in the entire process. She must understand and believe in the program. It is her responsibility to determine who can profit from this experience and to recognize when learning has been most successful. To do this, the teacher must be willing to study to improve her methods and to be continually growing in her understanding of children.

This approach to reading may have some implications for teacher-education programs. It would seem that all students preparing to teach should be familiar with the individualized approach to reading. The findings of this group are available on tape to any one wishing them.